CHINA WAS A LAVISH HOST

A Week's Welcome for Our Fleet at Amoy

GRATITUDE INSPIRED IT.

Good Will Toward America Expressed Officially.

Chinese Plans for Entertaining the Visitors Met With Many Obstacles—A Little Town Practically Built for the Occasion—The Visitors Impressed by the Chinese of High Rank—Clever Work of Dr. Mark in Getting Things to Shape—Trouble Made by Threats to Assassinate the Viceroy—Amoy Harbor Beautiful—The Fleet Sent Away Laden With Presents—China's Greeting Different From the Others.

U. S. S. LOUISIANA,
U. S. BATTLE FLEET,
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China gave a good old fashioned American handshake to the second squadron of the United States Atlantic fleet when it arrived at Amoy on October 30. The welcome was different from the greeting at other ports. It was exclusively official. A few gentlemen of high rank, great refinement and superior intelligence came from Pekin and they and the officials of the province of Fukien, of which Foochow is the capital and Amoy the leading city, said they were very glad indeed to see the Yankee sailormen of high and low degree and then gave of China's hospitality cordially, delicately, profusely.

High bred courtesy was the keynote; gratitude to us as a people, the well sustained theme of the occasion. There were no reservations in the welcome; it was formal but not perfunctory; it was punctilious but none the less from an absolutely open heart.

China was sorry that only one-half of the fleet could come because of the need of beginning the battle practice preparations of a month in Manila Bay, but she was as profuse in her welcome as if the entire sixteen instead of eight ships had arrived. She received the squadron with unfeigned gladness; she parted from it with unfeigned regret. There was not an American on the fleet that did not leave China yesterday with a feeling akin to affection.

WHY AMOY WAS VISITED.

It was a matter of some surprise that China elected to receive the squadron at Amoy, but there were good reasons for it. Amoy is known far and wide as the dirtiest seaport on the China coast; it probably is, but none of those in the squadron can speak with knowledge on that point because not a man entered the city during the stay. There was supposed to be plague there and cholera also, and undoubtedly those diseases were prevalent in the city.

The reason why Amoy was selected was that it was the most available place. It is strictly a Chinese port. Chefu was not available because the anchorage is bad there in October and November. Shanghai was out of the question for two reasons. The squadron could not get within several miles of the city, and there are so many foreign concessions there that the reception would have fallen largely into the hands of the foreigners. Hongkong is an English port, and of course China could not receive there. Amoy has a fine harbor, and China exercises full control of it, and hence it was decided to ask the ships to go there.

At once there came up the question of what to do with the men and officers when they came. The Chinese solved the problem by building a place of entertainment two miles below the city at what is known as the parade ground and the racetrack. Temporary buildings were put up around the great oval of the parade ground, and it was turned into a great reception place for the officers and an enormous playground for the men.

Then came the matter of food and drink. Nothing of that kind must be obtained from Amoy. There was danger of epidemic from that source. China surmounted that problem by bringing all supplies from Shanghai and in addition to that brought even horses and carriages, rickshaws and mandarin chairs with the men to work with them from the northern provinces. In fact, although the reception was held at Amoy, it was as far removed from that place as if had been held a thousand miles away. The enormous work involved was performed with a marvellous perfection of detail.

EMINENT OFFICIALS EXTEND WELCOME.

Not only did China send all this material down to Amoy and practically build a little town and establish a separate community for the squadron but she showed her keen interest in the visit by sending to represent her some of her most eminent and able men. At the head of the commission was Prince Lang.

The princes of China are of four kinds. The first is that of the immediate royal household, members of the family of the Empress Dowager and the Emperor. The second are immediate relatives, but not of the household They are such kin as cousins and uncles of the Emperor and Empress Dowager. The third are the immediate descendants of former Emperors. The fourth are the princes made by royal favor for distinguished services.

Prince Lang is of the third class. He is a grandson of a former Emperor. About 40 years old, of moderate stature, has a thoughtful, kindly face and a head with a dome on it that suggests at once the scholar.

He was most affable, but simple in manner and unassuming. He never failed in dignity in any way and in intelligence, culture and gentleness was a fine type of the Chinese gentleman. It is a pity that so few Americans know what a Chinese gentleman is.

With Prince Lang came a most interesting man, Liang Tunyen, vice-president of the Waiwupu, or Board of Foreign Affairs, and practically Secretary of State of China. In addition to that he is a Yale man of the class of '82, the famous "Ting" of those days, pitcher of his class baseball team, master financier of the problem of making both ends meet in a college town when your income is limited, and all around good fellow. Last year China selected him for Minister at Washington to succeed Sir Chentung, but just as he was about to depart for his post it was decided to send our old friend Wu back as Minister and to make Liang Foreign Secretary.

It was probably the greatest disappointment "Ting" ever had officially. He wanted to see America again; he had not been back since he left Yale.

Then there was Viceroy Sung of the Fukien Province, a most capable man. Then there was Tong Kaison, Yale, '84, special assistant to Prince Lang. In addition there was Dr. Mark, really Mok, formerly Li Hung Chang's physician, and as such his companion in Li's famous trip around the world the time that he visited the United States. There were also secretaries and minor officials and eminent men generally, fully one-half of whom spoke English. On the navy side there was the slender, urbane, ever smiling Admiral Sah, commander of China's north naval squadron.

CHINA'S REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

It was men such as these that China sent to greet us—the best that China has. If you want to know what China is judge her from these men and not from the coolie class seen in America. You began to realize something of the real China when you talked with these men. You understood then something of the reasons why commercially China stands on a high plane.

You caught something of the force that makes China exalt the scholar rather than the soldier. You could begin to see why great reverence is paid to old age, why obedience to elders is required, why the code of daily life requires the highest integrity, self-sacrifice, gentleness and uprightness of every kind. You then learned how a thousand years ago China practised many of the precepts of living which adorn what we call modern civilization.

In addition to sending such men to greet the squadron China took extraordinary pains with the entertainment. Dr. Mark, who is taotai of the Tientsin merchants and got his English education entirely in China, was put in charge of the details. China set apart something like $700,000 in gold to do the thing handsomely and told him to go ahead.

He went to Amoy and trouble began at once. Because he could not purchase supplies there the local taotai became disgruntled. Dr. Mark was his own architect. Around that parade ground he put up a dozen large buildings. One was of a permanent character. It was the reception and dining hall for the American officers, and back of it—part of it in fact—were the dwelling places of Prince Lang and Mr. Liang and their retinues.

It was necessary to build an electric lighting station, as Amoy has no electric lights; and to construct a little railroad to haul the building and other materials about the grounds.

Then a modern road had to be constructed through the grounds to the famous Nan Pu To temple. Storehouses of various kinds had to be provided. A large force of cooks and servants had to be employed, horses and carriages and other means of conveyance about the grounds had to be secured and transported, decorations had to be looked after and then a plan of entertainment had to be finished in detail.

TYPHOON WRECKS THE BUILDINGS.

It required an enormous amount of work and executive energy to bring order out of chaos, and just as all the building work was nearing completion the typhoon which tossed the fleet so badly on its way from Manila to Yokohama came along and wrecked and ruined everything.

Three feet of water stood on the parade ground. It came down from the hills in a flood and it swept in from the harbor in a bigger flood. There two weeks before the arrival of the squadron stood Dr. Mark facing a scene of desolation.

In addition, Amoy was hostile to him. He had to have help, and quickly too. Dr. Mark showed grit. He could get no building materials at Amoy. He cabled to Canton and Hongkong.

In a few days hundreds of skilled bamboo workers were on the ground with new material, hundreds of coolies were used as helpers, and the day before the squadron arrived the energetic doctor had the satisfaction of seeing his buildings all finished, his arches up and decorated, his supplies of all kinds fully up to the requirements, his conveyances all on the ground and so far as Americans could see everything in perfect order.

It was a great feat fought out under unusual difficulties. Not the least of Dr. Mark's troubles was the fact that the Taotai of Amoy impeached him in a memorial to the throne. In turn Dr. Mark impeached the Taotai and that little quarrel is still to be fought out. Mark's friends did not seem to worry much about the result and Mark himself had the placid indifference characteristic of the Chinese when he was asked about it.

He was burdened with a mass of detail, but Tong Kaison jumped in and helped him out and Mark had one night off with the naval boys which he will remember to his last day. If there are any echoes of the song "He's a Jolly Good Fellow" bumping around loose against the Pacific coast of the United States they came from that party of good cheer where Mark was an especial guest. He deserved all the praises he got and then some more. The reason he did not get more was because a time is always set in a fleet when the last launches leave the beach.

SMART WORK IN RESTORATION.

When Mark had finished his preparations it was seen that there were six great pavilions, each capable of seating 500 fleet sailors at tables, on the grounds. There were two large Chinese theatres. There was a Y. M. C. A. bungalow, which was burned through fireworks sparks two nights before we left and about which expensive cables were sent doubtless to the United States, although the total loss was 10,000 postal cards and the shack material of bamboo of which the structure was made; the total cost might have been $600.

There was the permanent building for the reception and the dwelling place for the Prince. There were three beautiful arches ornamented with some of the most minute and beautiful decorations that China can produce. There were enormous storehouses and kitchens, and there was an organized force of thousands of men to run the big enterprise.

And the electric lighting apparatus was at work. When the flood came that went by the board. Repairing it was almost too much for Dr. Mark. He had not the skilled workmen for that task and he could not get them. Well, the German gunboat Niobe was in the harbor and electricians on her heard of the plight of Mark and came to his assistance. For three days and nights they worked on it and they had the satisfaction of having the plant run perfectly all the time the Americans were there.

The commissary was a big undertaking. Not only were dinners given by the Prince every night but two of the stay, but luncheons were served every day to all officers ashore. Then there were about 2,500 sailors to feed twice a day.

All drinks were free. All the food and drink had to be brought from Shanghai. It required fine planning to have enough of everything. The servants had to be fed and housed, actors from Canton had to be provided and cared for and the populace had to be kept away from the grounds.

Nor was this work all that had to be provided. A great landing stage had to be erected for the navy launches. The tide at Amoy frequently rises as high as eighteen feet. A very large structure had to be projected into the water. Each ship had its own landing stage.

Then just off the landing a lot of little buoys were anchored for such of the launches as had to remain inshore, but not at the landing stage. In no port yet visited had such care and such provision been made for boating. Then the sampan men were organized to take the Americans up to Kulangsu, more than a mile away, and about the harbor, to and from the ships, when launches were not on hand.

There were also great firecracker poles and also staging for a display of fireworks on the last night of the squadron's stay to be put up. Surely Dr. Mark and his assistants had a big job to prepare all this.

THREAT OF ASSASSINATION.

But the trouble was not all ended there. Viceroy Sung was sent down from Foochow, and it was said to be his first official visit to the region of Amoy. He did not have an altogether happy time. Anonymous letters were received from Singapore threatening him.

It is not recorded that he was frightened or that any of the imperial commission was unduly nervous, but it was decided that no chances should be taken. No one wanted the squadron's visit marred by a tragedy, big or little, or by any other unfortunate event. The consequence was that Sung stayed on one of Admiral Sah's warships when not engaged in official duties on shore in the recreation grounds.

The threats had the effect of causing the Government to order about 3,000 soldiers to be brought down from the north. There were altogether about 3,500 soldiers stationed around the grounds, most of them at picket intervals. Companies were always held in reserve. Bodies were stationed at the entrance to the grounds and in other places to render appropriate military honors when occasion demanded it. All these soldiers had to be fed and sheltered. Of course this fell on Mark and his assistants.

Viceroy Sung never betrayed any concern over the threats against him. A Major-General of the army was on hand to see that he was protected. Sung, so it was reported, used the Chinese equivalent of our expression, "Let the other fellow do the walking," and the Major-General did it. He did it so effectively that Sung was still on earth when the squadron sailed away.

The Chinese of the commission did not take the threats seriously. It appears that there is a decided revolutionary party in China. It consists of malcontents who seem for the most part to be "agin the Gover'ment" to the extent that they would cause it trouble, stir up dissension, drive certain men from office—or in other words, just be common disturbers.

Certain sharp fellows have fostered the movement under various pretexts, but it is declared that they are in the work for the money they get out of the gullibles. They have to send warnings of assassination, it is declared, or have some alleged friend of the supposed victim warn him about coming death so as to make the supporters of the movement believe that the leaders really are at work.

Of course these leaders are classed as undesirables, and they have had to flee. They keep their headquarters in Singapore. Being political refugees, they are not extraditable, according to the tenets of modern international law, and so the propaganda for an overturn of some indefinite kind in China goes on.

The movement is gaining strength in the southern provinces, but it has not yet attained sufficient proportions, it is asserted, to make the Government at all apprehensive. Still Sung's adherents were worried, and everybody was glad, the Americans especially, that no harm came to the ruler of the province and that the festival of international rejoicing was not turned into an occasion of international sorrow.

NO WELCOME ON THE WATER.

When the second squadron steamed into the harbor early in the morning of October 30 the mountains loomed up beautifully, but the water was almost as a waste. The crowds that had come out in other ports were missing. A few junks with fishermen at their calling were in sight, but there was no hip-hurrahing of the masses. Admiral Sah, with four smart looking cruisers, joined the squadron outside and escorted it in.

The harbor of Amoy is picturesque. One of the first things that caught the eye was the beautiful pagoda, Lam-Taibu, sixty feet high, on top of a mountain 1,700 feet high at the south of the outer harbor.

As the squadron entered the inner harbor, past a gateway of islands, one caught a closer view of the hills, blue with haze, but stern and bleak. Slowly the harbor narrowed and in among the bleak hills one could see the roofs of huts where little villages were clustered and then we began to understand what Amoy is.

There is a sort of central city of about 250,000 persons, packed tightly in a small space, with a little walled citadel in the middle, all huddled close to the water's edge, and there are about 150 villages roundabout. Amoy is on an island eight miles in diameter and the town and the villages all belong to the one municipality, as it might be called.

The city is like all Chinese cities, we were told, only more so, at least in respect to dirt. It is unwholesome, crowded and cheerless. Except for nature's surroundings Amoy would be one of the most forlorn places on earth. It belies emphatically its poetic name, a literal translation of which is "the Elegant Gate."

The squadron came to anchor far down the harbor, just opposite the lower end of the parade ground, which was screened from view by an apparently new wall.

Behind the new wall the roofs of the Mark buildings and the tops of the arches, one of them bearing the usual word "Welcome" could be made out.

Soon Admiral Sah came to call on Admiral Emory. He got a warm welcome. He knew many of the officers of the fleet personally and was glad to greet them. He was dapper, urbane, delightfully gracious. The Americans were glad to see him. Some of them remembered how he helped to save the famous Oregon when she was on the rocks off the China coast.

Later Sah and Admiral Emory went to call on Prince Lang and the rest of the Chinese commission; various officers got ashore for a look around, and soon the news went through the squadron that everybody was going to have a good time at the big playground China had provided, especially the men. China expected 3,000 of them ashore daily and wanted them especially to enjoy themselves.

SUGGED KULANGSU'S CHARM.

Kulangsu, the site of the foreign colony, was a little more than a mile up the harbor. There was no restriction on visiting that place. It looked inviting. What appeared to be fine villas dotted the numerous hills. It was decided that it was even more picturesque than Chefu.

Well, when you went over there you agreed with that opinion. You found yourself on an island a mile and a half long and half a mile wide with beautiful residences perched here and there on cliffs, on the tops of great boulders, on slopes and rises, all facing the bay and with superb views of the bay and mountains. When you attempted to find your way about you were stuck. The place was crookeder than Boston. All through it run little highways about twelve feet broad, mere lanes or alleys, all bordered with high stone walls. Looking over the tops to the hills you could see the fine houses and occasionally through a gate you could see flower gardens, tennis courts, beautiful walks and evidences of secluded life.

Well, these alleys ran twisting and turning about with no apparent plan of order. You got lost between the walls before you could say Jack Robinson or at least had gone a hundred yards. You had to have a pilot to get about. Chinese servants were toting burdens here and there, peddlers were hawking vegetables, but they could give you no information. You had to wait until some one of the 250 foreigners living there hove in sight before you could get information to go to any one place. It took the Admiral's orderly more than two hours to find the cable office, which is situated in one of these sheltered villas.

As you wandered about you came upon no less than three crowded Chinese villages; and oh, so dirty and crowded! But you liked Kulangsu. There was a fine foreign club there, many mission churches, hospitals and the flags of the various foreign Consuls flapping in the air. You felt secure and at home. You came across a beautiful tennis park, and when you learned that the place, whose name literally translated means Drum Wave Island, was governed by the representatives of no less than six nations without friction and had been a foreign concession for about six years, you said that international friendship was something more than a fiction.

In shape the boulders on shore, on hills, in the water were the most forbidding looking things imaginable. It was easy to see that a superstitious people would be overawed by them. They seemed to take on the forms of demons, and one look at them made you wonder if the Chinese ever dared stay out of doors at night.

There was one familiar to the sailormen who had been in Amoy before that was missing. It was the famous rocking stone. Many a jack tar has gone up to the great pile on the mainland and set it rocking by the mere push of a good strong right arm. Early in the present year a party of German man-of-warsmen went up there for a lark and they had so much fun that they rocked the thing over and it landed in the valley below.

Some of these rocks had Chinese inscriptions on them. That on the Camel Rock says:

Kulangsu is a paradise on earth.
Amoy is the very best.

There wasn't much untruth about Kulangsu, except in the hot season.

THE OFFICIAL ENTERTAINMENTS.

Amid these picturesque surroundings and with a vast amount of expensive and carefully studied preparations the squadron came to receive China's hospitality and assurances of friendship. Did China make good? Well, it isn't a long story. With the exception of one day given up to the foreign colony on Kulangsu all the entertaining was inside the parade grounds.

It began on the night of arrival with a Chinese dinner and a theatrical performance given to the officers in the reception hall. The officers were received by the Prince and found themselves in a long banquet hall, whose ceiling was festooned with broad bands of heavy brocaded silk. It made one almost eager to climb up after it. A general comment was:

"My, if I only had enough of that to make a gown for the wife! Wouldn't she go crazy over it?"

Beautiful potted plants and dwarfed trees filled up the floor spaces near the tables. Richly carved screens were placed here and there. It was a most attractive room. At a signal the company of about three hundred sat down. It must be confessed that there was some trepidation because the bill of fare had been printed in the programme for the week. This was the menu:

Bird's Nest Soup.
Shark's Fins and Crab Roe.
Rolled Fish.
Fried Oysters.
Mushrooms and Bamboo Shoots.
Shrimp Balls.
Fried Duck's Liver and Giblets.
Boiled Ham and Chicken.
Devilled Crab on the Shell.
Roast Duck.
Minced Chicken and Cauliflower.
Li Hung Chang Chop Sui.
Tea, Fruits, Cakes.

Well, it was really pretty good. Bird's nest soup is all right and it is one of the most expensive dishes in China. Shark's fins are also all right if you know the game. Most of the officers ate heartily and said they enjoyed it.

The dinner was repeated the next night for those officers who had to remain on board ship the first night. The wines were European and very choice. No expense in the way of service or food and drink was spared. Prince Lang read a speech of welcome and Admiral Emory replied, and the Emperor and President were toasted.

The men of the squadron did not begin to get their enjoyment until the next day, when they were sent ashore. They took possession of the playground, went up to the Lam Pho-to temple on the edge of the grounds where a bazaar was held, and ate and drank their fill on the parade ground. Through the Y. M. C. A. the Government distributed 15,000 cigars and 60,000 cigarettes a day free to them. In every eating pavilion there was free beer and soft drinks.

After the first day it was decided that it would be better to serve beer only with the men's meals, but soft drinks were to be had at any time. For two days the men had Chinese chow for their meals and then, as was the case with the officers, it was changed to European food.

It was just a long play spell all around. When the men got tired of loafing around the parade ground they went up to the temple. Several times during the day religious services were being held by the priests. They were praying for good weather and were giving thanks for the safe arrival of the fleet.

So the days went by rapidly. Every morning and afternoon there were sports until the championships were decided. That brought out the rooters.

If you want to see fun go to a baseball or a football match between two ships. There is one aspect of naval athletics that is most praiseworthy. Umpires and referees are usually officers. The sense of discipline prevails on the athletic field as it does on shipboard. When an umpire decides there is no chewing the rag. You can hear almost every kind of a shout except the familiar howl, "Kill the umpire!"

Word had been passed around that the Government had sent most beautiful prizes down. There were gold cups valued at $1,200 each for the baseball and football championships and miniature copies of the large cups for the individual players. For rowing and field sports there were silver cups.

Well, the Louisiana got all the rowing honors, as was to be expected. She fought out the football finals with the Virginia and the Virginia won. That same day, and using some of the men from the football team, she fought out the final game in baseball, and the Kentucky won by a close score. Prince Lang and Mr. Liang insisted on watching all the sports.

GIFTS FROM THE RECEPTION COMMISSION.

It was on the afternoon of the last day that the full hospitality was realized. Then were presented the costly gifts China had prepared to commemorate the visit.

In addition to presents and trophies for the athletes and those who managed them there were beautiful and expensive presents for commanding officers and even for the ships. Every ship received a beautiful silver bowl. The Admiral and Captains each received a beautiful bowl nearly as large as those given to the ships, at least two chairs and a table in ebony inlaid furniture. Then there were laoquer boxes, dressing sets, ivory jewel boxes and a lot of other beautiful things showered upon the commanding officers.

In addition each officer in the fleet received a cloisonné vase, in which the flags of America and China were crossed. Each man in the squadron received a cloisonné cup. The squadron was fairly loaded down with gifts.

One of the last gifts that came to the Louisiana was about forty wicker cases containing enormous pomelos, a kind of grape fruit. They came from the private garden of the Dowager Empress.

THE GOOD-BYS.

The leavetakings at the landing stage that night were a little hard to say. Admiral Sah seemed to find it difficult to keep down emotion in true Chinese fashion. The Americans had been guests on his ships. They had found his flag ship a marvel of cleanliness and naval shipshapeness, to use a word which one of the Americans coined. "Never was a private yacht in a more beautiful condition," was a frequent remark.

Sah took it hard, this good-by business, but finally all got away and promptly at 8 A. M. on November 5 the squadron started out of the harbor, Sah in his flagship leading the way. A great cloud of smoke from millions of firecrackers that were set off along the wall of the parade ground hid the scene of the festivities from sight. Sah finally stopped, honors and salutes were exchanged and the squadron passed out to sea.

When once outside the harbor the Louisiana turned southwest to go to Hongkong. Admiral Schroeder took charge of the seven other ships and they fired a salute to the squadron commander about to be retired. The salute was returned in the usual style.

Admiral Emory hauled down his flag and the customary salute of thirteen guns was given just before sunset this evening.

UNDER FIVE FLAGS.

It Takes That Many to Run Small but Turbulent Crete.

To the southward, its green clad, snow capped mountains rising from a turquoise sea, lay Crete, the island of mythology and massacre. It was a picture of sunshine and animation, of vivid colors and strange peoples such as one seldom sees except in some gorgeously staged comic opera.

But even as this was in my mind, says a writer in the *Travel Magazine*, a gun boomed out from a crumbling bastion and five little balls ran up five flagstaffs standing in a row on the uppermost ramparts and broke out into five flags.

The morning breeze caught up their folds and held them straight out as though for our benefit, so that we could make them out quite plainly. Four of them were old friends that I had encountered on all of the seven seas—the Union Jack and the Tricolor and the St. Andrew's cross of Russia and the red, white and green banner of Italy—but the fifth flag, which flew somewhat higher than the others, was of unfamiliar design; the single blood red square, however, bounded by the Greek cross and bearing the gleaming star of Bethlehem, told its own story and I knew it for the flag of Crete.

I knew that there was deep significance in the design of that unknown flag and in the position of the four familiar ones that flew below it, for they signalled to all the world that the Turk had been driven out, never to return; that Christianity had triumphed over Mohammedanism and that the cross had indeed replaced the crescent; that the centuries of massacre were now but memories; that peace in the guise of foreign soldiery had for a time at least found an abiding place in Crete, and most significant of all, that the strange flag with the single star would be upheld if necessary by the mightiest array of bayonets and battleships in all Christendom.

Canea, which is the seat of government, is the most picturesquely cosmopolitan spot west of Suez. It is equidistant from the shores of Europe, Asia and Africa, it has a mild and equable climate, living is cheap, there is a large garrison of foreign soldiery, there are no extradition treaties in force and trouble of one kind and another is always brewing.

Like a magnet, therefore, Canea has attracted the scum and offscouring of all the Levant—needy soldiers of fortune, professional revolution makers, smooth spoken gamblers and confidence men, rouged and powdered women of easy virtue from East and West, Egyptian donkey boys, out at elbows dragomen who speak a score of tongues and hail from no one knows where—all that rabble of the needy, the adventurous and the desperate which follow the armies of occupation and are always to be found on the fringe of civilization.

CHICKENS COMING TO TOWN

MANY SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF FOLKS GREET THEM.

Pigeons and Pet Stock, Prize Cats and Song Birds Have Also Admirers—Puzzle of Breeding Winners—Annual Show Seen in Madison Square.

All the finest chickens, pigeons, cats, song birds and pet stock of the country fairs and shows are in training now for their winter visits to Manhattan and Boston. The two greatest feather and fur shows of the year are held in the two cities, the New York exhibition having precedence in dates, for it is to be in Madison Square Garden from December 28 to January 2. The 500 cats will be on view for three days only under the auspices of the Atlantic Cat Club. The song birds compete for prizes given by the New York Ornithological Society and there are special clubs to promote the interests of the cavies, rabbits, Belgian hares, fancy mice and rats and of every breed of fowls or pigeons. The amalgamation of various fanciers will create the twentieth annual show of the New York Poultry, Pigeon and Pet Stock Association and make it the usual success.

Weather does not make or mar this show, for the entry fees from an aggregate of 8,000 exhibits place it on velvet before the doors are opened. Fine weather increases the attendance of the casuals, but the zealots will brave any weather to attend the feathered congress. Besides, in all lines the show is a great trade mart. Breeders of chickens and pigeons come from all parts to get new stock by purchase or barter, which is also true of the minor exhibitors. Then too the New York show is but one of a circuit of 1,000 held each year east of Pittsburg, and some of the buyers want recruits for their pens at the smalier exhibitions. There are also poultry buyers each winter at the Garden of fancy breeds to be sent to Cuba or South America.

Indian games, turkeys and pit games are most in demand for export to the West Indies or South America, but occasionally some one will order a consignment of a standard meat or egg breed—Plymouth Rocks, Leghorns, Cochins, Minorcas, or anything orthodox in the farmyard. As a rule there is a vast difference in preparing pit games for the show circuit or for mains, fine feathers counting most in one case and rugged courage in the other. Yet the pit fanciers, especially of tropical countries, often need a pure strain to impart new vitality and courage to the battling strains. There are always several classes for pit games, however, at the New York show and more than one bird is penned, cut and clipped for the pit with a record back of it of winning bouts. No one ever wants a pit game that has been whipped. An exhibitor of pit games in Madison Square Garden every winter and a very interesting person has died since the last show. He was D. G. Hetfield, a Rahway carriagemaker who had built road wagons for Robert Bonner and Commodore Vanderbilt and who kept pit games for the fun there was in it.

Varied indeed are the motives to draw city visitors to the poultry and pigeons who do not own a plot of ground big enough for a coop or dove cote. Just as the Horse Show draws dressmakers and milliners, so do purveyors of fashions come to the birds to study combinations in colors for a new gown or bonnet. Certainly no merging of tints could be more gorgeous or equally delicate in contrasts—take your pick—as the plumage of a golden pheasant, the harmonious blendings of the wood duck feathers or of many poultry and pigeon types. Often the young women and men of an art class set up their easels to paint impressions from animated nature. To study too, but with a difference, come cooking classes under the leadership of a demonstrator who uses the exhibits as texts for ideas on entrées, roasts and how to carve. But the great majority of the casuals are women or men forced to live in town who yearn for a suburban or country home with ground enough to keep chickens, pigeons and so on. A few are country bred, and the exhibits recall days when to care for the chickens was a daily task, but the "chicken fever" is most virulent with the city born folk.

With the best grade of eggs selling at 60 cents a dozen wholesale and $1 retail and the ordinary grade at retail at the same price for the same number, while the prices of turkeys, waterfowl, chickens and squabs are relatively as high, there is every reason why a poultry yard should be a good investment. Whether a gentleman farmer is obsessed, or a man who comes to the city every day to business, to have the "chicken fever" may be deemed good judgment. One should take off the hat to him. Those who have this speculation in their eyes inspect the incubators and brooders as carefully as they note the good points of cocks or hens. Make haste slowly is the best advice to be handed out to the novice who takes up poultry breeding, yet no one has ever failed in it who has the industry to be always "on the job." There is always in it at least a saving on the family's bills for eggs and at the butcher's.

Bantams possess as much glory and variety in plumage as the pheasants or pigeons. Some of them if stripped of their feathers would be no larger than one of the newly hatched chicks in the incubators. The breeds are created by careful selections and crossing, new types coming out each year. The oldest bantam breed is the black breasted red game, which much resembles the jungle fowl of India, one of the primal forms, it is claimed, of the domesticated fowl. In pigeons the African owls and pigmy pouters are the breeds to gain value by excessive smallness, just as the runts are most in demand by their size and weight. The regular pouters with their long, slim bodies and swelling chests are the tallest of pigeons. Breeders work on what may be termed scientific lines to breed for midgets or giants, just as they do to gain the feather markings and shape of the type to be reproduced. Frizzles and silkies are the smallest bantams. On the frizzles the shaft of each feather curves forward, as the shafts do in the ruffs of some pigeons and in frizzled canaries, while the silkies have only a thin separated feather that resembles hairs and gives to them a fluffy look. Both are old breeds from the Far East, but the bantam type is a modern innovation.

Practical poultrymen work out by "rule of thumb," that is by years of actual experimenting with their fowls, the crosses that assure them of the type they want. This is how the Orpington and the many varieties have within thirty years been made a standard breed in England. Many scientists, however, have studied the problem of inheritance in poultry. They give the methods of selection, in which the offspring show clearly the characteristics exclusively of the father or of the mother; of mixture, in which there is a fusion of characteristics, and of combination, in which a new characteristic appears in the place of one representative in either parent The theorists have evolved many rules of crossing that would be of value if made readily available to the poultry keepers.

If an African owl or pigmy pouter is too large for the show class the fancier usually keeps it as a stock bird in the hope that by mating it with an opposite the hatch may yield one or two of the sort wanted. The pigeon fanciers are more daring in their experiments than poultry breeders, as a rule, unless the latter are groping in the dark to reproduce a "sport," which is an accidental product. At the show every feather fancier knows just wherein his poultry or pigeons are weakest from the standard of perfection. They traffic together for hours at a time and some big deals are carried through. Single birds in the poultry classes are priced on the show catalogue all the way from $1,000 down to $25, while the list of pigeons bristles with quotations of $100 to $10 for a cock or hen. In Great Britain an entry may be claimed at the listed price and if the owner demurs it is sold by auction and the show managers receive one-half of the surplus. In this country the only merit in a catalogue valuation is that it means that the owner won't sell at all.

Children are frequent exhibitors of rabbits, cavies or fancy rats and mice. They breed them in the back yards of city houses and sometimes on the roofs of apartment houses. The owners of cats are mostly women, and the long haired Angoras or Persians are often importations from England and are worth a good deal of money. The only short haired cats of value in the hundreds are the Siamese, which much resemble pug dogs.

The country's poultry and egg crop is said to be double the value of the cotton or tobacco crop. Whether this is so or not the pure bred fowls developed by the shows keep up the productiveness of the barnyard breeds. With whatever motive the visitor attends the Madison Square Garden show, whether on business or pleasure, the time will not be wasted.

MAINE'S HUNTING SEASON.

Thirteen Human Beings, Ten Thousand Deer and 200 Moose Killed.

BANGOR, Me., Dec. 19.—Thirteen human beings, 10,000 deer, 200 moose and a great number and variety of birds and small animals were killed in the Maine woods during the hunting season that closed on Tuesday The deer kill is nearly a third greater than in 1907, but there is a decided decrease in moose, while the loss in human life is much greater than the average.

From the principal hunting grounds of the State, north and east of Bangor, there have been brought to this city about 3,200 deer and 125 moose. Large bull moose, the only kind worth hunting, have been rather scarce this season, although young bulls were numerous and promise good hunting another year. Cows, which are protected at all seasons, are very numerous.

It is estimated that about one-half the deer killed in open season are transported by rail, and on this basis about 6,400 were killed this season along the headwaters of the Penobscot, around Moosehead Lake, in Aroostook and northern Washington counties, which region is the best for big game hunting, and this indicates a total kill in the State of about 10,000 deer.

About 45 per cent. of the game killed was taken by hunters from other States, who pay an annual license fee of $15 for the privilege. There is some talk of asking the Legislature to impose a tax of $2 on resident hunters; also of a reduction in the legal allowance of big game from two deer and one moose to one deer and one moose. A movement to prohibit the taking of firearms in the woods in times of drought is also regarded with favor as a precaution against forest fires.

The season's death roll:

Ralph Downs of Sanford; shot by companion, who "didn't know it was loaded."

Eddie Turner of Peru; pulled gun, muzzle first, from boat.

Andrew Mushero of Danforth; pulled gun, muzzle first, from boat.

Roy Jarvis of Charlotte; pulled gun, muzzle first, from wagon.

Irving Pritchard of Dresden; got in range of his brother's gun while duck shooting.

Wilfrid Paradis of Lake Megantic, P. Q.; found dead on railroad track near Lowelltown; supposed to have been mistaken for a deer or to have got in range with a hunter's rifle.

Milford Fox of Chapman plantation; shot by young brother, who "didn't know it was loaded."

Herbert W. Cummings of Bethel; found dead in the woods near Lake Parmachenee, supposed to have been mistaken for a deer.

Addison Knowlton of Swanville; accidentally shot by his cousin while hunting small game.

Frank H. Marshall of Portland; lost in woods while hunting and died of exposure.

Clarence Harford of Wayne; killed by accidental discharge of his shotgun, caused by his falling.

John Davis of Rockland; killed by accidental discharge of his rifle, caused by his falling.

Morris W. Littlefield, Grand Falls; shot by his companion, who mistook him for a deer.